

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4225
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MASS, MU, IR, US
SUBJECT: REPAIR OF OMAN'S TOW COMPONENTS IN IRAN

REF: (A) 77 MUSCAT 1013 (NOTAL), (B) 77 MUSCAT 1539

1. OMANGOV MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAS VIRTUALLY DECIDED TO PURSUE THE IRANIAN OPTION IN MAINTAINING ITS TOW MISSILE EQUIPMENT (SEE REF A). THIS IS IN LIEU OF THE JORDANIAN OPTION (REF B) AND THE POSSIBILITY OF RENEWING THE PROGRAM FOR MAINTENANCE IN U.S. WHICH EXPIRED LAST DECEMBER 31. LATTER PROGRAM HAS PROVED COMPLETELY UNSATISFACTORY FROM OMANI STANDPOINT. OMANIS WILL SOON WRITE LETTER TO IRANIAN SIDE FORMALLY REQUESTING THE MAINTENANCE SERVICE AND ASKING PRICES ETC.

2. AN OMANGOV MINISTRY OF DEFENSE TEAM RECENTLY VISITED IRAN AND WAS IMPRESSED BY FACILITIES FOR TOW REPAIRS AVAILABLE THERE. IRANIANS STATED THEY COULD DO ALL FORESEEABLE WORK WITH TURN-AROUND TIME OF TWO WEEKS. OMANI TOW COMPONENTS NEEDING MAINTENANCE WOULD BE TRANSPORTED TO INSTALLATION AT SHIRAZ OF IRAN ELECTRONICS INDUSTRIES, A STATE-OWNED FIRM, ON THE IRANIAN C-130'S
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THAT MAKE REGULAR FLIGHTS TO AND FROM OMAN. SAME FLIGHTS WOULD BRING REPAIRED COMPONENTS BACK TO OMAN.

3. THE MAINTENANCE WORK IN IRAN WOULD BE DONE ALMOST ENTIRELY BY IRANIAN TECHNICIANS, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SAID TO BE FIVE AMERICAN ADVISERS AT IRAN ELECTRONICS INDUSTRIES. OMANGOV TEAM MET ONE AMERICAN ADVISER AT FIRM'S PLANT

DURING RECENT VISIT.

4. IF THIS PROJECTED PROGRAM CAUSES PROBLEMS UNDER U.S. REGULATIONS ON TRANSFER OF MILITARY PARTS AND TECHNOLOGY, NOW IS THE TIME FOR US TO WEIGH IN BEFORE CONTRACT IS SIGNED AND SEALED. OMANGOV HAS JUST ABOUT MADE UP ITS MIND AND ONLY SIGNIFICANT REMAINING QUESTION IS THE IRANIAN DECISION. OMANGOV'S UNDERSTANDING IS THAT SHAH HIMSELF WILL MAKE FINAL DETERMINATION.

5. UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE, WE WILL ASSUME THAT NO REPRESENTATIONS TO OMANGOV ARE NECESSARY FROM OUR SIDE IN PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT. WE WILL OF COURSE SEEK TO DETERMINE IF AND WHEN CONTRACT WITH IRANIANS IS CONCLUDED.
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